
短 報 Short Report

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A Record of a Common Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*
from Hokkaido

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At 06 : 50 on 6 September 1986, at Lake Tofutsu, a well known site for migrants in northeast Hokkaido (Brazil in press), the Hokkaido birdathon team observed an immature Common Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*. It was seen just to the south of Route 244, between the road and the lake, on an area of short grassland. When first noticed it was foraging on the ground, in the open, near a flock of Grey Starlings *Sturnus cineraceus*. Periodically it flew up to perch on nearby wild rose bushes before returning again to feed on the ground. All four members of the team (M. A. Brazil, N. Kurosawa, M. Takada, and S. Yamamoto) and H. Oyama, were able to observe the bird which was quite confiding and remained in view for several minutes. The habitat it was seen in was typical of the kind of area that I am familiar with watching the species in Europe.

Only three previous records of this species have been published from Japan. The first, a spring record, was on Kita Iwo-jima in the Volcano Island group in April 1936. The second was on wasteland in Tokyo in November 1969, and the third in Kyoto in October 1972 (OSJ 1974). The bird at Tofutsu thus constitutes the fourth Japanese record and the first Hokkaido record. It is in fact the first time that the species has been recorded north of the Kanto district.

The Common Wheatear is an abundant long-distance migrant. It is pan-palaearctic in its breeding distribution, and all populations including those breeding in Alaska, winter in Africa, Arabia and northwest India. The great circle migration route of the Alaskan and northeast Siberian populations should take birds well west of Japan in both spring and autumn (see Mead 1983). Gibson (1981) regarded the Common Wheatear as casual in the autumn in the Near Islands, and recorded three individuals during his studies on Shemya Island (the extreme southwest of the Aleutian Chain between Alaska and Kamchatka). His records were on 13-14 September and 27 September 1977. Assuming that where-ever possible this species chooses to migrate overland, then the Aleutian, Kamchatka, Kurile Island chain offers an alternative route for birds which are off course. This route would inevitably lead to Hokkaido, making that island the most likely place in Japan for migrants to appear. It is possible that the Common Wheatear may have occurred before in Hokkaido, but been overlooked because the island is so underwatched.

A careful analysis of the migrants which occur in the extreme southwestern Aleutians could well indicate other species of migrants which might also reach Hokkaido.

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北海道でのハシグロヒタキ *Oenanthe oenanthe* の観察

マーク・ブラジル

1981年9月6日、バードソンを行っているとき、澁海湖畔で、ハシグロヒタキの若鳥1羽を観察した。この種は広く北極圏で繁殖し、アフリカ、アラビア、インド北西部で越冬する。アリューシャン、カムチャッカ、千島列島経由で渡るものが北海道に渡来している可能性がある。

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